



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Steven D. Rhoads

From Farm to Food Bank: Senator Rhoads' Senate Farm Day of Action Delivers 150 Pounds of Fresh Produce, Supporting Hunger Relief & Sustainable Farming

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Senator Steve Rhoads was joined by Senator Dean Murray, as well as legislative interns and volunteers for a morning of action on the farm.

On June 3, New York State Senator Steve Rhoads brought together fellow Long Island Senators, including Senator Dean Murray, and legislative interns for the Annual Senate Farm Day of Action at Island Harvest's Healthy Harvest Farm in Brentwood. This annual initiative, proudly spearheaded by Senator Rhoads, brings Long Island senators together for a hands-on day of service and sustainability.

In partnership with Island Harvest—one of Long Island's leading hunger relief organizations—the group rolled up their sleeves and got to work harvesting, cleaning, drying, and packaging nearly 150 pounds of fresh lettuce, which was distributed through Island Harvest's food bank and served on Long Islanders' dinner plates by the next day.

"This is what taking action for sustainability looks like—boots on the ground, sleeves rolled up, and a shared commitment to feeding our neighbors," **said Senator Rhoads.** "It was a fun, educational, and incredibly rewarding day."

Participants were given a behind-the-scenes look at how real change happens on the ground thanks to Island Harvest's Healthy Harvest Farm, which is remarkably run by just one staff member—Cassidy—and a dedicated team of volunteers. Cassidy was gracious, informative, and instrumental in guiding everyone through the day's work.

“Hunger is a serious issue on Long Island, with food insecurity rising nearly 10% from 2022 to 2023—now affecting one in twelve residents, or approximately 240,470 people, including 44,520 children,” **Senator Rhoads noted.** “Initiatives like this remind us of our region’s rich agricultural heritage and the vital role local food banks play in addressing hunger.”

Senator Rhoads extended a heartfelt thank you to Cassidy, Island Harvest President & CEO Randi Shubin Dresner, and the entire Island Harvest team for their leadership, hospitality, and tireless efforts to make a difference.

“Our Senate Farm Day of Action was a great success and a testament to what we can accomplish when we come together with purpose,” **Rhoads added.** “I look forward to continuing this initiative and supporting the incredible mission of Island Harvest.”

“Island Harvest plays a vital role in ensuring families across Long Island have access to fresh, healthy food. I am thankful to my colleague NYS Senator Rhoads for extending an invitation to volunteer at Island Harvest’s Healthy Harvest Farm for Farm Day. Receiving a behind-the-scenes look into how this major food bank operates and participating in the process of bringing fresh produce to families’ kitchen tables was truly amazing, and I would encourage others to do the same. Together, we can make a real difference in the lives of our neighbors,” **said State Senator Dean Murray (District 3).**

“This is the power of community,” **said Randi Shubin Dresner, president & CEO of Island Harvest Food Bank** “our elected officials and their teams coming out and doing the work to help feed our neighbors in need. Sens. Steve Rhoads and Dean Murray have been champions of Island Harvest in Albany, and we cannot thank them enough for their work at the farm. Through their efforts, families across Long Island had access to the freshest possible produce to supplement their meals and nourish themselves and their families.”